GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4161
ANSWERED ON:14.12.2001
EXPENDITURE ON STAFF BY INDIAN MISSIONS ABROAD
SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the CAG in its report 2 of 2001 on page 136-137 has brought out the fact that according to his ministry PAO failed to ascertain if salary drawn only for the duly sanctioned staff and it was difficult / not feasible to scrutinise the related check at the Ministry for over 65 regular commercial missions where it provided funds;

(b) whether his ministry has no system to ensure that the Indian Missions abroad with commercial wings rigorously, follow the Ministry`s sanctions of staff, test check revealed unauthorised expenditure of over Rs.48 lakh on staff costs persisted even after the audit commented on the issue;

(c) whether his ministry has not replied the audit report till February, 2001; and

(d) if so, the reaction of his ministry over the above and the steps it propose to take to streamline the working of the missions and his ministry?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY)

(a) : The CAG in its report 2 of 2001 on pages 136-137 has stated that .. `it was the responsibility of the PAO at the respective Mission to ascertain that salary was drawn only for the duly sanctioned staff, and it was not feasible to scrutinize the related check at the Ministry for over 65 regular commercial missions where it provided fund`.

(b) As per prevalent procedure payments are checked by Pay and Accounts Office of Department of Commerce and Ministry of External Affairs. Audit check of each Mission is also carried out.

(c) Draft Audit Para was received on 7.6.2000 and reply on draft para was sent to Audit on 31.1.2001. The Audit Para No. 7.2 in the C&AG Report No. 2 of 2001 was received in the Ministry on 27.8.2001. The Ministry has finalised the Action Taken Note (ATN) and has sent to The Principal Director of Audit, London on 28.11.2001 for onward submission to Auditor General.

(d) After revisiting the earlier instructions relating to control and administration of Commercial Missions, appropriate directions to the Commercial Missions have been issued.